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Intelligence

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Notice to the Daily

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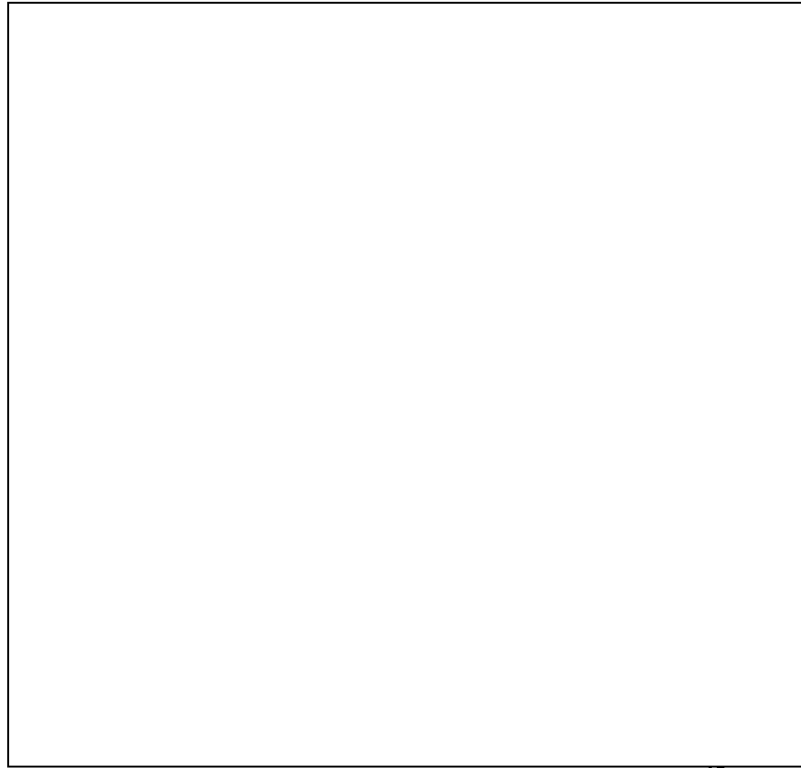
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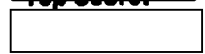
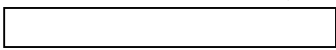
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Iraq-Iran: Tehran's Stalled Offensive 13

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Special Analysis

IRAQ-IRAN:

Tehran's Stalled Offensive

Flooding, Iraqi air attacks, and logistic difficulties have disrupted Tehran's plans for a major offensive at the Al Basrah Front, at least temporarily. Although Tehran apparently still plans an attack in that area and is bringing in more troops, the delays are giving Iraq time to strengthen its defenses and reduce the chances of a major Iranian victory. Iranian leaders already are squabbling over blame for the heavy losses in Iran's last attack, and another major effort that results in little gain and heavy losses could cause serious quarrels in the Iranian regime.

Heavy spring rains have considerably hindered Iranian forces on the southern front.

Iranian leaders reportedly are squabbling among themselves over who is to blame for the 20,000 to 30,000 casualties suffered since late February, according to several sources. There was growing concern in some villages in late March about the large number of casualties among young volunteers.

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Stiffening Iraqi Defenses

The Iraqis have used the last two months since the end of the last Iranian offensive to strengthen their defenses around Al Basrah.

The Iraqis intentionally breeched a levee to flood Iranian positions on the southern Majnoon Island.

Baghdad also has made command changes. [redacted]
commanders of an Iraqi division that failed to recapture the southern Majnoon Island in early March have been demoted or replaced. [redacted]

Outlook

Baghdad is aware that any major Iranian attack in the next month will have to come in the Al Basrah area, although limited diversionary attacks are possible elsewhere. Iran has nearly half its entire Army on this one front and would be unable to shift its forces quickly. [redacted]

Iraqi forces are weaker along the northwest side of the marsh and along the Shatt al Arab. In several weeks, however, the Iraqis probably will have heavily fortified these areas too, further reducing the chances of an Iranian victory. [redacted]

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